What's new at Shanna Schmidt Numismatics Inc. View this email in your browser

SHANNA SCHMIDT NUMISMATICS INC

**Newsletter #240:**

## What's New at Shanna Schmidt Numismatics Inc.

**Hello coin enthusiasts!**

Hope everyone is having a nice week. Tomorrow is Valentine's Day and to celebrate that I would like to write a little about numismatics and coins.

**Love, Marriage, and the Language of Coins**
***A Valentine's Day Reflection from Shanna Schmidt Numismatics***
Valentine's Day feels like a thoroughly modern celebration—flowers, chocolates, and handwritten notes exchanged between those we care about. Yet the themes at its heart—love, partnership, and devotion—are as old as civilization itself. Unsurprisingly, these ideas also found their way onto the coins of the ancient world.

In Roman culture, love was personified by Venus, the goddess of beauty, desire, and fertility. Her image appears frequently on Roman coins, particularly during the late Republic and early Empire. One of the most famous connections between coinage and love comes from Julius Caesar, who claimed descent from Venus through the Trojan hero Aeneas. By placing Venus on his coinage, Caesar was not merely invoking love, but divine ancestry and legitimacy. Later emperors continued the tradition, using her image to suggest harmony, fertility, and prosperity under their rule. Sometimes Venus appears with her son Cupid, the mischievous archer whose arrows caused mortals and gods alike to fall in love.

While Venus represented passion and attraction, the Romans also celebrated the quieter, steadier virtues of marriage. The goddess Concordia embodied harmony and mutual understanding—qualities essential to both domestic life and imperial politics. Coins were often issued to commemorate imperial marriages, featuring Concordia with symbols of unity. Emperors such as Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, and Septimius Severus struck coins that emphasized marital harmony, not only as a personal virtue but as a symbol of political stability. A happy imperial household suggested a stable empire.

By the 18th and 19th centuries, coins took on an even more intimate role. In Britain and the United States, it became fashionable to turn circulating silver coins into love tokens. One side of the coin would be carefully smoothed down and engraved with initials, a date, or a short romantic message. These pieces were often worn as jewelry or carried as keepsakes. Unlike official coin designs, each love token was a personal expression—handmade, unique, and deeply sentimental. In many ways, they are the most direct numismatic equivalent of a Valentine's card.

From the divine beauty of Venus to the marital harmony of Concordia, and finally to the personalized love tokens of the modern era, coins have long carried messages of affection,

metal not only as money, but also as symbols of relationships, promises, and shared lives.

Perhaps that is part of the enduring charm of coins: they are objects meant to circulate, to pass from one hand to another—much like the sentiments we exchange on Valentine's Day.

**Wishing you a wonderful Valentine's Day**

*Now not everything is Valentine related.*
**New Podcast: Travels with the Naxos Tetradrachm**
My good friend and customer, Dr. Tim Wright, recently published a book with the help of Spink on the Coinage of Naxos called Travels with the Naxos Masterpiece: An Introduction to Greek Numismatics Through the Lives of a Sicilian Coin. An Amazon link is here. https://www.amazon.com/Travels-Naxos-Masterpiece-Introduction-Numismatics/dp/1911718088
In tandem with the book, Tim and Annabel Schooling have created a podcast that is really interesting. The podcast is not just a plug for Tim's book, although the creation of it is directly related, rather investigates all various aspects of the life of this wonderful type. He looks at historical information on Naxos, why the coin is considered a masterpiece, collectors who have purchased the piece, researchers that have studied it and more. This is a light and yet educational perspective from a hobbyist turned numismatic author.

**Travels with the Naxos Masterpiece** - Episode 1 (Art), Part 1 (of 2)
To date they have done 3 episodes in 6 segments of varying lengths from 15-30 minutes. I highly recommend it if you have the time.

**Naville Numismatics 100 (22 February)**
There are 853 lots in the upcoming Naville auction, closing on February 22. As many of you know, Naville is the sister company to NAC Zurich. While NAC does hold a stake in Naville, the ownership itself lies outside the Russo family. Being affiliated with NAC does have its advantages, as many mid-level coins are directed to Naville sales.

In recent months, Naville hasn't received quite as much attention, largely because the supply of coins from the Dattari collection has gradually diminished. This 100th sale, however, is shaping up to be much more exciting, with a number of well-pedigreed pieces and attractive types throughout the catalog. The lower starting prices should also help generate strong interest.
It is definitely worth a look. I would also note that Naville will once again ship through NAC's Chicago offices, which should mean far more reasonable shipping costs and less concern about potential tariffs. If you choose this option, however, a bit of patience is required. In my view, the savings are well worth the slightly longer delivery time, but it's important to be comfortable with a modest delay.

**NAC Zurich February Online Only Sale (26 February)**
This is a relatively new endeavor from NAC in which they have an exclusive online only sale. While many might brush this off as their undesirable material, it truly is not the case. This upcoming sale has a number of fantastic pieces at reasonable estimates. For an online auction it is relatively small at 629 lots. For example, lot 2, a pretty awesome full shekel from Carthage weighing 7.27 grams has a tremendously good strike and pedigree to match. With an estimate of a mere 1,250 CHF, it is a rather good deal. Lot 17 is a dreamy nomos from Metapontum with a pedigree back to a 1905 Sotheby's sale. It made it into a 2020 Leu Numismatik sale but has largely been in private collections before that time. Lot 39, a tetradrachm from Akragas, has a stronger estimate but similar ones have sold for 20,000+ CHF in earlier sales. Lot 45, a gorgeous coin from Gela, which was in the Hermitage museum and later sold at a Felix Schlessinger sale from 1934. Lot 61, a scarce and beautiful bronze from Panormus with a Janus head. Lot 77 is a highly desirable gold litrae from Syracuse. It comes from a 1979 M&M FPL and was also part of the Patrick Tan Collection. Lot 110 is a beautiful heroic Philip II tetradrachm at a low estimate. Lot 134 is an early stater from Berge with a nice older pedigree back to 1995. Lot 142, a tetradrachm from Maroneia in Thrace, is from the very first NAC auction in Zurich in 1999. It also happens to have a great bearded satyr as a symbol. Lot 177, a hemidrachm from Demetrias

auctioning his copy (of which I own) from his notes within the catalog. Lot 282, a scarce, high pedigreed obol from Athens. It comes from a 1933 Ars Classica sale. Lot 291, is a perfect Aegina sea turtle. It also has an extremely low estimate. Lot 387, a tetartemorion from Caria, Mylasa, is just a fraction but it has excellent artistry. Lot 421, a stater of the Lycian dynast Mithrapata, which is near perfect. There are so many more that I could highlight but this gives a good representation. We will be bidding in this auction so please get in touch if you need auction representation help. As with Naville, if you opt in, these coins will be shipped through to Chicago for customer ease.

**Fritz Rudolf Künker 438 (16-17 March)**
As is typical for their Spring auction cycle, Künker has a week-long cycle of sales. In the interest of time I will just review the ancient sale. There are 1,075 lots in the upcoming sale. Estimates are low for their sale, but please don't base your levels on their estimates as they are far too low in my opinion compared to the actual market demand. I've noticed my lots hammering ten times more than the estimate. The estimate for Künker sales isn't typically a great indicator of the actualized hammer.

While the estimates are probably too low, the Künker sales do offer a wonderful selection of moderately priced (and often pedigreed) material. A few lots I noticed: Lot 20 is a rare highly stylized celtic coin with a pedigree going back to 1995 Auctiones sale. Lot 90 is another eastern celtic type, a gold fraction from the Vindeliker tribe in Germania. It has a look that reminds me of the coins of Istrus but with both heads back to back (vs. reverted as it is on the coins of Istrus). A charming example. Lot 139 is a very special variety from the city of Kroton in Bruttium. Along with the typical eagle/tripod imagery, it also has symbols on the obverse of a figure of Hermes and a Nike crowning the tripod on the reverse. It boasts a pedigree back to 1922 Ars Classica sale and was part of the Lockett collection. Lot 191 is an extremely affordable (right now) tetradrachm of Akanthos from the recently defunct Roma auction house. Lot 261, a well centered and complete sea turtle from Aegina. Lot 273, the labyrinth from Knossos, is a very difficult type to obtain. Lot 288, an electrum stater from Kyzikos, with none of the typical edge splits that plague the series. Lot 388, a highly desirable and large denomination type with the Parthian King Phraates IV and his wife Musa. Musa was a slave-girl that was given to Phraates IV by the Emperor Augustus in 2 B.C. After giving birth to a son, Phraates V, she poisoned her husband and ruled as regent to her son until she was forced to flee for her life. Lot 518, the famous Eid Mar denarius of Brutus. It isn't the most attractive example but it is affordable at a 50,000 Euro estimate. Lot 595 is a sharp example of the early Roman emperor Vitellius. It also has a Leo Benz pedigree. Lot 691, a hard to acquire aureus of Pertinax, the first of the five rulers of quick succession following the murder of Commodus, from 193 AD. It also has a Bourgey pedigree dating back to 1951. Lot 731-735, are four denarii of Gordian I (lot 731) and II (732-735). A type that is desirable but difficult to acquire. Lot 853, a miliarense of Honorius with lovely toning and sharp strike. Also a good pedigree to match.

There are loads more but this is a good taste of what is available. We will be participating in this auction so please get in touch. Also important to note is that some coins may not be importable into the U.S. Künker follows strict procedures for importing into the U.S. so if the paperwork doesn't meet their higher standards then you are out of luck. We can check beforehand if there will be an issue.

## Coin of the week

**Roman Republic, Italy. Crr1230atius Maxsumus,
Rome, c. 75 BC**

AR Denarius, 3.87g (18mm, 3h).

Bust of Libertas r., draped and diademed; behind, pileus and MAXSVMVS downwards; border of dots / Roma and Venus, each holding staff in r. hands (Roma holds sword in l. hand and places l. foot on wolf's head; Venus has Cupid about to alight on shoulder); rudders on either side on prow; [below, C. EGNATIVS. CN. F. F[; on r. CN.N upwards; on l., control mark; border of dots

**References:** RRSC Vol 2 Moretti D184.3, Bab 2, BMC 3287, Craw 391/3, Syd 787

**Grade:** A little o/c on obverse and reverse, otherwise a great strike with lustrous surfaces. EF

**Price:** $2750

rr1230

Buy Coin

Little is known of this moneyer but historically in 75 BC a few important events occurred. Marcus Tullius Cicero, the Roman statesman, lawyer, philosopher and scholar is made quaestor in western Sicily. A quaestor is a public official that can be defined loosely as an "investigator". Additionally, Nicomedes of Bithynia died in 75 BC and bequeathed his kingdom to Rome. This created a chain reaction where Mithridates of Pontus, angered by the action of Nicomedes, starts a war on Rome resulting in the third Mithridatic War. This was the longest of the three wars and ended in 63 BC with Mithridates' defeat ending the Pontic Kingdom.

Coin on my website

If you are interested in any other coins I have to offer please visit my website: shannaschmidt.com

Until next week!
*Shanna*

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